

# Mumps

## Public Information Sheet

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### What is Mumps?

Mumps is an acute viral illness that mainly affects the salivary glands. The disease is caused by the mumps virus.

### What are the symptoms?

The usual symptoms include fever, headache, muscle aches, tiredness, and loss of appetite; followed by swelling of salivary glands. The parotid salivary glands (which are located within the cheeks, near the jaw line, below the ears) are most commonly affected.

### How is the mumps virus spread?

The mumps virus replicates in the upper airway tract and is spread through direct contact with airway droplets, saliva or contact with contaminated fomites. The period from when a person is exposed to the virus to the onset of any symptoms, also called the incubation period, can vary from 16 to 18 days (range 12-25 days). An infected person can transmit the mumps virus to a non-infected person from 2 days before his symptoms appear to about 5 days after the symptoms appear (infectious period).

### Who is likely to get this illness?

Mumps affects all age groups. Recent mumps outbreaks occurred among those who have been vaccinated with mumps, measles and rubella (MMR) vaccines.

### What are the complications?

Even though severe complications are rare, mumps can cause inflammation of the brain and/or tissue covering the brain and spinal cord (encephalitis/meningitis), inflammation of the testicles (orchitis), ovaries and/or breasts (oophoritis and mastitis), spontaneous abortion, and deafness, usually permanent.

### How is the mumps diagnosed?

Mumps testing should be done by a healthcare provider for mumps serology, viral isolation or viral RNA, to confirm the diagnosis.

### Is there a treatment for mumps?

Currently, there is no specific treatment for mumps.

### Can mumps be prevented?

There are vaccines available to prevent from mumps infection. The mumps vaccine is found in MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) and MMRV (measles, mumps, rubella and varicella) vaccines.

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